The Call and Biography of Imam Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul-Wahhāb

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The Call and Biography ofImam Muhammad ibn‘Abdul-Wahhāb

Author: Shaykh ‘Abdul-‘Aziz ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Bāz

Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. May Allah’s peace and blessings be upon His slave and Messenger and the best of His creation, our master and leader Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah, and upon his family, his Companions, and those who ally themselves with him.

My honorable brothers and my dear sons, this is a brief lecture that I present to you as an enlightenment of thoughts, clarification of facts, sincere advice that I offer to Allah’s slaves for His sake, and as fulfillment of some of the due rights that I owe to the man whom the lecture is about. The title of the lecture is: The Call and Biography of Imam Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul-Wahhāb.

Speaking about reformers, callers to Allah and revivers and reminding the people of their manners and praiseworthy attributes and glorious deeds as well as presenting their biographies that demonstrate their sincerity and truthfulness in their call and reformation have always been something that the souls long to and the hearts find comfort in. Every person who has a sense of protective zeal for his religion and wishes to conduct reformation and call others to the path of the truth would surely like to listen to such speech. For this reason, I chose to speak to you about a great

man, a significant reformer, and a zealous caller to Allah. It is the Shaykh who undertook to revive the Islamic religion in the Arabian Peninsula in the twelfth century of Hijrah, namely Imam Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul-Wahhāb ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Ali at-Tamīmi al-Hanbali.

People have known this Imam, especially the scholars, leaders, and dignitaries inside and outside Arabia. He has been the subject of many writings, both brief and extensive, and some writers have assigned for him independent works. Even Orientalists wrote much about him, while others wrote about him in the course of their writings about reformers and history. The fair among them described him as a great reformer and a reviver of Islam who was rightly guided by his Lord. They are too many to be counted.

They include the prominent author Abu Bakr ash-Shaykh Husayn ibn Ghannām al-Ihsā’i. He aptly wrote about the Shaykh and provided great benefit. He presented his biography and his battles with elaboration and penned many works about his treatises and his deduction from the Book of Allah Almighty. Shaykh ‘Uthmān ibn Bishr also wrote about him in his book ‘Unwān al-Majd. He shed light on his call, biography, battles, and Jihad. Other authors from outside Arabia wrote about him, like Dr. Ahmad Amīn in his book Zu‘amā’ al-Islāh, and he was fair in what he wrote about him. Moreover, the prominent Shaykh Mas‘ūd an-Nadawi wrote about him and called him the wronged reformer. He excellently wrote about his biography. Others wrote about him as well including the great Shaykh Al-Amīr Muhammad ibn Ismā‘īl as-San‘āni who was contemporary to him and followed his call. When the call of the Shaykh reached him, he was pleased with it and praised Allah for it.

The outstanding scholar Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Ali ash-Shawkāni, the author of Nayl al-Awtār, wrote about him and lamented him in a wonderful elegy. Many others who are known to readers and scholars also wrote about him besides those mentioned earlier. However, since many people may be unaware of the reality of this man, his biography and call, I thought to contribute to introducing him to the people and highlight his good conduct, righteous call, and sincere striving, and explain some of what I know about this Imam so that those who harbor some doubt or confusion about him or about his call and approach would learn the truth. Imam Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahhāb was born in 1115 AH according to the famous report about his birthday (may Allah have mercy upon him). It was also said that he was born in 1111 AH. However, it is more commonly known that he was born in 1115 AH.

He was tutored by his father in the village of ‘Uyaynah where he was born. It is a well-known village in Yamāmah in the north of Najd, to the north west of Riyadh city and is located 70 km away from it. It was there that he was born and grew up as a righteous young boy. At an early age, he was taught Qur’an recitation and studied diligently at the hands of his father Shaykh ‘Abdul Wahhāb ibn Sulaymān who was a great jurist, competent scholar and a judge in ‘Uyaynah. After reaching puberty, he performed Hajj and headed to the Sacred House and there he learned from some of its scholars. Thereafter, he went to Madīnah where he met its scholars and stayed therein for some time. He was a student of two great famous scholars of Madīnah at that time: One of them was Shaykh ‘Abdullah ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sayf an-Najdi who was originally from Al-Majma‘ah. He is the father of Shaykh Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abdullah, the author of Al-‘Adhb

al-Fā'id Fi 'ilm al-Farā'id. The other was the eminent Shaykh Muhammad Hayāt As-Sindi. These are the two scholars that are famously known to be among his teachers in Madīnah and it is possible that he learned from others as well that are not known to us.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb moved to Iraq as a seeker of knowledge. He went to Basrah and met with its scholars and learned from them what Allah willed for him of knowledge. He proclaimed the call to Tawhīd (the Oneness of Allah) and invited the people to follow the Sunnah. He informed them that it is incumbent upon all Muslims to learn their religion from the Book of Allah (the Qur'an) and the Sunnah of His Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). He conducted many discussions and debates with the scholars there. A man called Shaykh Muhammad al-Majmū'i was known for being one of his Shaykhs from whom he acquired knowledge. Some of the dishonest scholars in Basrah rose against him and he, along with his Shaykh, were subjected to abuse. Therefore, he left Basrah and intended to go to Greater Syria, but he could not due to lack of material means. So he left Basrah to Zubayr, and from there he went to Ahsā' where he met its scholars and studied with them some issues related to the fundamentals of the religion. Afterwards, he headed to Huraymilā' in the fifth decade of the twelfth century of Hijrah because his father, who had been a judge in 'Uyaynah, had a dispute with its ruler and as a result moved to Huraymilā' in 1139 AH. Shaykh Muhammad traveled to his father in Huraymilā' after the latter had moved to it in 1139 AH. This means that he arrived in Huraymilā' in 1140 AH or later on. He settled there and remained preoccupied with learning and teaching knowledge and spreading his call in Huraymilā' until his father passed away in 1153 AH. At that time, some

of the people of Huraymilā' turned against him in an evil manner and some mean ones among them were about to kill him. It was said that some of them climbed over the wall of his house to get to him but some people noticed them so they ran away. After this incident, the Shaykh (may Allah have mercy upon him) moved to 'Uyaynah.

The reason those mean people were angry at him was that he commanded people to do what is good and forbade them from doing what is evil. He also urged the rulers to inflict discretionary punishment on the criminals who attacked people and committed robbery and looting against them and caused them harm. They were those mean people who were referred to as the slaves there. When they knew that the Shaykh was against them and that he condemned their actions and urged the rulers to punish them and curb their evil, they were enraged and decided to kill him, but Allah protected and guarded him. Then, he moved to 'Uyaynah whose Emir was then 'Uthmān ibn Nāsir ibn Mu'ammar. He was his guest and the ruler welcomed him. He said to him: "Move on with your call to Allah. We are with you and will help you." He was kind and amicable to him and expressed his approval of what he preached.

The Shaykh was busy teaching, guiding and calling the people, men and women, to Allah Almighty, and directing them to do what is good and to love each other for the sake of Allah. His fame spread in 'Uyaynah and the people came to him from the nearby villages. One day, the Shaykh said to Emir 'Uthmān: "Let us destroy the dome of Zayd ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him) as it was built without a basis of guidance. It is something that does not please Allah Almighty, and the Prophet (may

Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) forbade building over the graves and constructing mosques over them. In fact, this dome has been a source of Fitnah to the people and changed their creed. It has even led to Shirk, so it must be demolished." The Emir said in response: "I have no objection to that." The Shaykh said: “I fear that the people of Jubaylah would revolt as a result.” Jubaylah is a village located near the grave. So ‘Uthmān set out with an army of 600 fighters to demolish the dome, and the Shaykh (may Allah have mercy upon him) accompanied them. When they approached the dome, the people of Jubaylah came out to save it and protect it. But when they saw Emir ‘Uthmān and those who were with him, they desisted and refrained from resisting. The Shaykh started the demolishing and removal of the dome and Allah Almighty eliminated it by his hands (may Allah have mercy upon him). Now, let us give a brief account of the conditions in Najd before the mission of the Shaykh and mention the reasons behind his mission and call.

Before the Shaykh started his call, the people of Najd were in such a state that no believer would ever approve. Major Shirk had emerged and spread amongst them to the point that they started to worship domes, trees, stones, and caves. They also worshiped anyone who claimed to be a Waliyy (ally of Allah), even though he might be mentally deranged; they worshiped besides Allah mad and lunatic people who just claimed to be Awliyā' (pl. of Waliyy). Sorcerers and diviners became so common in Najd, people asked them and believed their words and there were none to express his disapproval of such wrongs except those whom Allah willed them to do. People were mostly overwhelmed by worldly desires and few were those who would rise for the sake of Allah and support His religion. The case was the same in the Sacred Mosques in Makkah and Madīnah, and in Yemen this type of Shirk was common as well. They built domes over the graves and called upon the so-called Awliyā' seeking relief from them. These practices were so rampant in Yemen. Also, Najd was swept by such uncountable manifestations of Shirk that varied between a worshiped grave, cave, tree, or a lunatic or insane person who was called upon for relief apart from Allah. Calling upon the jinn was also a known practice in Najd. People used to seek relief from them and slaughter animals for them, which they placed in the corners of their houses in hope for their help and fear of their evil. When the Shaykh saw that Shirk was being extensively practiced by the people, with no one expressing disapproval of that or calling the people to the way of Allah, he proceeded with his task diligently and adopted patience in his preaching efforts. He was aware that it was imperative to strive in the cause of Allah with patience and endurance of harm. He earnestly instructed, directed, and guided the people when he was in 'Uyaynah. He was keen to

communicate with the scholars and study the issue with them in the hope that they would join him in supporting the religion of Allah and striving against such Shirk and superstitions. Many scholars of Najd, Makkah, Madīnah, Yemen and others responded to his call and messaged him expressing their approval to join him. Others, however, disagreed with him, criticized his call and averted the people from following him.
They were either ignorant followers of myths who knew nothing about the religion of Allah or His Oneness, but instead they only knew the falsehood, ignorance, Shirk, religious innovations and superstitions in pursuit of their ancestors. They are those about whom Allah Almighty says: {They say: "We found our forefathers on a path, and we are following their footsteps."} [Surat az-Zukhruf: 23] Another group who were perceived to be people of knowledge rejected his call out of obstinacy and envy, for fear that the laymen would say to them: "Why did you not disapprove of what we were doing before? Why did Ibn 'Abdul Wahhāb emerge and was on the right path, but you, despite being scholars, did not disapprove of this falsehood?!" They were envious of him and felt shameful before the people, so they showed stubbornness against the truth, favoring immediate benefits over lasting ones and following the example of the Jews who preferred the worldly life to the Hereafter. We ask Allah for safety and protection against that!

As for the Shaykh, he was patient and diligent in his call. He was encouraged by some of the scholars and dignitaries from inside and outside Arabia. He was resolved to accomplish his mission and sought the help of his Lord. Before that, he extensively studied the Book of Allah and had the upper hand in

interpreting it and conducting deduction from it. He also studied the biography of the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and his Companions. He was so focused in his studies that he came to learn what helped him and made him stay firm on the path of the truth. He dedicated himself to serving the call to Allah and insisted on spreading it among the people, and he sent messages to governors and scholars about this matter, whatever the consequences.

Allah Almighty made his good hopes come true, caused the call to spread through him and supported the truth with his efforts, appointing for him helpers and assistants until the religion of Allah prevailed and His word was superior. The Shaykh carried on his mission in ‘Uyaynah by teaching and guiding the people. Then he shifted to the phase of physical action and embarked upon removing the traces of Shirk with his hands when he realized that his verbal call was not effective. He started to turn his words into action and proceeded to remove as much as he could of the manifestations of Shirk. He said to Emir ‘Uthmān ibn Mu‘ammar: “We must demolish the dome that is built over the grave of Zayd,” i.e. Zayd ibn Al-Khattāb, the brother of ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattāb, The Commander of the Believers (may Allah be pleased with them all). Zayd was among those who were martyred in the fight against Musaylimah Al-Kadhdhāb in the year 12 AH. When he was killed, it was said that the people built a dome over his grave, though it is possible that the grave belonged to someone else, but it was commonly known to be his. ‘Uthmān agreed with the Shaykh as mentioned earlier, and the dome was demolished, all praise be to Allah, and its traces have disappeared up to the present time. Allah Almighty eradicated it when it was demolished out of a good and upright intention that aimed at supporting the truth. There were other graves, one of them was said to belong to Dirār ibn al-Azwar. It also had a dome built over it and was demolished along with other shrines. There were caves and trees that were worshiped besides Allah Almighty, and they were all removed and people were warned against celebrating them.

The Shaykh (may Allah have mercy upon him) proceeded with his call in word and deed. One day, a

woman came to him and confessed that she had committed adultery multiple times. He inquired about the soundness of her mind and was told that she was sane. As the woman insisted on her confession of adultery and did not retract it, nor did she claim that she was subject to coercion or misconception when she had committed it, and she was also Muhasanah (married/previously married), the Shaykh ordered that she should be stoned to death. The judgment was executed since he issued it in his capacity as the judge of ‘Uyaynah. The Shaykh became known afterwards for demolishing the dome, stoning the woman, his great call to Allah, and the immigration of the people to ‘Uyaynah.

News about the Shaykh reached Sulaymān ibn ‘Uray‘ir al-Khālidi, the Emir of Al-Ahsā’ and its subordinate tribes of Banu Khālid. When this Bedouin learned that the Shaykh was calling to Allah, demolishing domes, and establishing the prescribed punishments, he was so alarmed and enraged. Bedouins were commonly known for wronging others, shedding blood, plundering properties and violating sanctities, except those whom Allah guided. He feared that the Shaykh would gain more popularity and thus jeopardize his authority. Therefore, he wrote a threatening message to ‘Uthmān, ordering him to kill the Mutawwa‘ (a term used informally to refer to a seeker of knowledge who is below the rank of a scholar) whom he is keeping with him in ‘Uyaynah. The message read: “We have learned such-and-such about the Mutawwa‘ who is with you. So, either you kill him or we withhold the tribute that we pay to you!!” This Bedouin was paying a regular tribute of gold to Emir ‘Uthmān. The message distressed ‘Uthmān and he feared that if he disobeyed him, he would stop paying him the gold or fight him. So, he

said to the Shaykh: “This Emir wrote to us a message to such-and-such effect, and it is not of our goodness to kill you. But we fear this Emir and we cannot fight him. If you believe that you should leave us, then do so.” The Shaykh replied: “I am calling the people to the religion of Allah, to realize the implication of testifying that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Whoever holds fast to this religion and supports it sincerely, Allah will support him, aid him, and be his ally against his enemies. So, if you adhere to patience and uprightness and accept this good, then rejoice! Allah will help you and protect you against this Bedouin and any other. He will even give you authority over his land and clan.” ‘Uthmān said: “O Shaykh! We cannot fight him nor can we stand disobeying him.” At that point, the Shaykh left ‘Uyaynah to Dir‘iyyah. He headed to it on foot, setting out in the early morning and arriving there at the end of the day. He was not expelled by ‘Uthmān. In northern Dir‘iyyah, he entered upon one of its good people whose name was Muhammad ibn Suwaylim al-‘Urayni. He accommodated the Shaykh and it was said that he was worried of having him as a house guest. The man was in distress and was afraid of the Emir of Dir‘iyyah Muhammad ibn Saud. The Shaykh reassured him and said: “Rejoice and expect good things! What I am calling to is the religion of Allah and Allah will surely make it superior.” News of the Shaykh reached Muhammad ibn Saud, and it was said that his wife was the one who told him about the Shaykh after some righteous people had come to her and said: “Inform Muhammad about this man and encourage him to accept his call. Urge him to help and assist him.” She was a righteous good woman. When Muhammad ibn Sa‘ūd, the Emir of Dir‘iyyah and its subordinates, entered upon her, she said to him:

“Rejoice in this great advantage! This is a gain that Allah has sent to you; a man calling the people to the religion of Allah, to the Book of Allah, to the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him). What a great gain it is! You should hasten to accept him and support him, and never hesitate in doing so!” The Emir accepted her advice, but he was hesitant as to whether he should go to him or invite him to come to him. He was given advice on the matter, and it was said that it was his wife along with a group of righteous people who told him: “It is not proper that you invite him to come to you, but you should go to him in his house in veneration of knowledge and those who call people to what is good.” He responded to their advice, earning thereby the happiness and goodness that Allah decreed for him. May Allah have mercy upon him and grant him an honorable abode. He went to the Shaykh who was staying at the house of Muhammad ibn Suwaylim. He greeted him, talked to him, and gave him promises of support, safety, and assistance. The Shaykh said to him: “And you too rejoice for the support, empowerment and a good outcome. This is the religion of Allah; whoever supports it, Allah will support him, and you will find the consequences of it very soon.” Thereupon he said: “O Shaykh! I will give you my pledge to support the religion of Allah and His Messenger and to perform Jihad in the cause of Allah. However, I fear lest you should leave us to another land after we support you and after Allah grants you victory against the enemies of Islam.” The Shaykh said: “Nay, I give you my pledge that blood is for blood and destruction for destruction. I will never leave your land.” These words constituted a promise from the Shaykh that he would always be on his side and would stay with him and strive along with him in the cause of Allah until the religion of Allah becomes

superior. The pledge was conducted according to these terms and people started to flock to Dir'iyyah from all places; from 'Uyaynah, 'Irqah, Manfūhah, Riyadh and other nearby towns. Dir'iyyah became a destination to which people migrated from all places. People started to hear about the Shaykh and his lessons in Dir'iyyah and about his call to Allah and guiding to Him so they came individually and in groups. Thus, the Shaykh stayed in Dir'iyyah and was highly respected, supported, and loved. He organized lessons in Islamic creed, Qur'an, Qur'an explanation, Fiqh, Hadīth, Hadīth terminology, Arabic language, history and other useful branches of knowledge.

People came to him from everywhere, and the youth in Dir'iyyah, as well as others, learned from him. He arranged many lessons, both public and private, spread knowledge in Dir'iyyah and kept on calling people to Allah. Then he started to perform Jihad and sent messages to the people asking them to join him in this endeavor in order to eliminate the symbols of Shirk in their lands. He began with the people of Najd, as he sent messages to their emirs and scholars. He communicated with the scholars of Riyadh and its Emir Dahhām ibn Dawwās. He also communicated with the scholars and emirs of Kharj and those in the southern region, Qasīm, Hā'il, Washm, Sudair and others. He continued to message the scholars there as well as the scholars in Makkah and Madīnah. His messages also reached far beyond the scholars of Arabia; he sent messages to the scholars of Egypt, Greater Syria, Iraq, India, Yemen and others. He did not slacken to communicate with the people and establish arguments, reminding them of the Shirk and Bid'ah (innovation in the religion) in which most of the people had fallen. This, however, does not mean that there were no people who supported the religion, for

there were supporters for it. Allah Almighty guaranteed that this religion would definitely be supported. A group of the Muslim Ummah will not cease to be victorious by virtue of their adherence to the truth, as stated by the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). There were supporters of the truth in many regions, but we are now focusing on Najd, where evil, corruption, Shirk, and superstition were significantly rampant. Although there were righteous scholars living there, yet they were not active in the field of Da'wah or in carrying out their role in it as due.

There were also callers to Allah and supporters of the truth in Yemen and other places. They recognized such Shirk and superstitions, but their efforts were not rewarded by success like the call of the Shaykh due to various reasons including the lack of helpers and the failure of many of the callers to show patience and endure harm in the cause of Allah.

Also, some callers lacked the knowledge needed to instruct the people with suitable methods, proper words as well as wisdom and good admonition. There are still other reasons beside those mentioned. As a result of his extensive communication, messaging, and Jihad, the Shaykh gained wide fame and his call gained prominence. His messages reached the scholars inside and outside Arabia and great multitudes of people were influenced by his call in India, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Africa, Morocco, Egypt, Greater Syria, and Iraq. There were many callers to Allah in these countries who were knowledgeable of the truth and were preaching it. When the call of the Shaykh reached them, they grew more active and powerful and became known for their call. The call of the Shaykh kept on gaining fame and reaching further

areas in the Muslim world and beyond. Then, in this recent era, his books and treatises were published, and so were the books written by his sons, grandsons, supporters, and helpers from among the Muslim scholars inside and outside Arabia. There were also published books speaking about his call, biography, and his supporters. All those books have become known among the people in most countries and regions. However, as a matter of fact blessings are envied and that every caller to Allah inevitably has many foes. Allah Almighty says: {Similarly did We make for every prophet enemies, devils from among men and jinn, whispering to one another alluring words of delusion. If Allah had willed, they would not have done so. So leave them to their fabrications.} [Surat al-An'ām: 112] When the Shaykh gained wide fame for his call, wrote many books and published valuable works among the people, and the scholars communicated with him, there emerged against him enviers, opponents, and enemies.

His enemies split into two groups: a group that antagonized him in the name of knowledge and religion, and another that antagonized him in the name of politics, yet they used the guise of religion. They took advantage of the enmity of some scholars against him who accused him of being on the wrong path and other false accusations, but he (may Allah have mercy upon him) continued in his Da'wah efforts, clearing misconceptions, clarifying proofs, and guiding people to the facts as presented in the Qur'an and Sunnah. However, they accused him of being one of the Khārijites, others said that he infringed the consensus of the scholars and applied absolute Ijtihād, paying no consideration to the earlier scholars and jurists. He was also accused of other things, which were based on the lack of knowledge of some of them.

Another group antagonized him in imitation of others, and another for political purposes in fear of losing their authority, so they used the guise of Islam and adopted the statements of misleading superstitious people.

Actually, the opponents of the Shaykh were of three categories: heretical scholars who perceived the truth to be error and error to be the truth, believing that building over the graves and constructing mosques upon them, and calling upon the dead and seeking relief from them is part of the religion and guidance. They even believed that whoever disapproves such acts is a hater of the righteous Awliyā' (saints) and that he is an enemy that should be fought for the sake of Allah.

Another category of those who were considered to be scholars did not know the truth about him or the truth that he was preaching. Rather, they imitated others, believed the false accusation that were hurled against him by the misleading erroneous people, and thought that they were right for accusing him of hating the Awliyā' and prophets, antagonizing them and denying their Karāmāt (supernatural abilities and extraordinary events). Therefore, they criticized his call and averted the people from him.

The third category comprised of those who feared for their positions and ranks. They showed enmity to the Shaykh so that the supporters of the Islamic call would not reach them and remove them from their posts and take hold of their lands. The verbal war, debates, and arguments between the Shaykh and his opponents continued, with both parties exchanging messages and engaging in mutual debates and arguments, which was maintained also by his sons, grandsons, and supporters, leaving behind a large

legacy of messages and answers. These messages, Fatwas, and answers were compiled in volumes, most of which were published, praise be to Allah. The Shaykh went on with his call and Jihad, aided by Emir Muhammad ibn Saud, the Emir of Dir'iyyah and the forefather of the Saud Dynasty. The banner of Jihad was raised since 1158 AH. They performed Jihad with words and swords, and with arguments and proofs. Preaching and Jihad with the sword continued side by side. As a matter of fact when a caller to Allah lacks power to support the truth and save it, his call soon fades out, his fame vanishes, and he eventually loses his helpers. It is also known that weapons have a great effect in spreading the call, suppressing the opponents, supporting the truth, and curbing falsehood. In connection to that, Allah Almighty truthfully said: {We have sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and sent down with them the Scripture and the criteria of justice, so that the people may uphold justice. And We sent down iron, in which there is great might and benefits for people, so that Allah may make known those who help His cause and His messengers without seeing Him. Indeed, Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty.} [Surat al-Hadīd: 25] Allah Almighty states that He sent the messengers with clear evidence, i.e. lucid proofs and arguments with which Allah made the truth manifest and rebutted falsehood. He sent with them the Book that included clarification of the truth, guidance, and explanation. He also sent with them the criteria of justice with which the wronged one restores his right from the one who wronged him, and He sent down iron that stands for power that is needed to deter and hold back those who turned a deaf ear to arguments and clear evidence.

Someone aptly illustrated this meaning in the following verses:

It is either revelation or a sharp weapon, whose edges tears out the veins of those who swerve.

The first is the treatment of the disease for every ignorant one, while the other is the treatment of the disease for everyone who swerved.

In fact, a wise person with a sound natural disposition benefits from the clear proofs and accepts the truth based on its evidence. Whereas, the unjust one who follows his own inclination is only deterred by the sword. Hence, the Shaykh took the matter of Da‘wah and Jihad seriously and diligently, supported by the Saud Family, may Allah have mercy upon them for that. They carried on their Da‘wah and Jihad efforts from 1158 AH until the Shaykh passed away in 1206 AH, which amounts to about 50 years of Jihad, Da‘wah, strife, and argument about the truth. They clarified to the people the word of Allah Almighty and His Messenger (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him), called them to the religion of Allah and guided them to the Shariah of the Messenger of Allah until the people obeyed them and entered into the religion of Allah. They demolished the domes they had, removed the mosques that were built upon the graves, and referred judgment to the Shariah, shunning the laws and rules of their fathers and forefathers that they used to follow. As they returned to the truth, the mosques were enlivened by establishing the prayers and the circles of knowledge, Zakah was duly paid, and people fasted in Ramadan. The people also started to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and security prevailed in the towns, villages, roads, and deserts. The Bedouins were kept in check, entered into the religion of Allah, and

accepted the truth. The Shaykh spread the Da‘wah among them, sent to them teachers and guides and sent judges to the towns and villages. This abundant good and explicit guidance spread all over Najd. Truth spread and the religion of Allah prevailed.

Then, after the death of the Shaykh (may Allah have mercy upon him), his sons and grandsons continued his mission of Da‘wah and Jihad, led by Imam Shaykh ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad, Shaykh Husayn ibn Muhammad, Shaykh ‘Ali ibn Muhammad, and Shaykh Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammad. There were among his grandsons Shaykh ‘Abdur-Rahmān ibn Hasan, Shaykh ‘Ali ibn Husayn, Shaykh Sulaymān ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad, and others. Some of the students of the Shaykh also contributed to such efforts like Shaykh Hamad ibn Nāsir ibn Mu‘ammar and a large number of the scholars of Dir‘iyyah and others. They continued to conduct Da‘wah and Jihad and spread the religion of Allah Almighty. They wrote messages, penned works, and strove against the enemies of the religion, not motivated by personal motives but by their endeavor to call the people to the Oneness of Allah and to worship Him with sincerity, along with their mission to demolish the domes and mosques that were built over the graves, call people to make the Shariah their referential authority in judgments, enjoin what is good, forbid what is evil, and establish the Shariah-prescribed punishments. Those were the causes that let to the conflict between them and some people. In summary, the Shaykh and his descendants and supporters guided the people to the Oneness of Allah and commanded them to celebrate it. They warned them against Shirk, along with the means leading to it, and obligated them to implement the principles and rulings of the Islamic Shariah. As for those who refused and persisted in

their Shirk after they had been called to the truth and offered clear proofs, they strove against them in the cause of Allah, went to them in their lands to make them submit to the truth, or else they would impose it upon them by force, together with their people. Furthermore, they warned people against Bid‘ah (innovation in religion) and superstition of which Allah did not send down an authority, like building over the graves, constructing domes over them, referring judgment to Tāghūt (false deity), seeking information from sorcerers and diviners and believing their words, etc. Thus, Allah Almighty removed all these at the hands of the Shaykh and his helpers, may Allah have mercy upon them all.

The mosques were enlivened by teaching the Qur’an and the Sunnah, as well as Islamic history and useful Arabic knowledge. People engaged in study, acquiring knowledge, guidance, Da‘wah and directing others to what is good. Some of them were focused on issues related to the worldly life like industry and agriculture, but they still learned knowledge and contributed to Da‘wah and guidance efforts. So, they learned, studied, and also worked in industry and trade, serving both their religion and worldly interests. They were callers to Allah and guides to His way and also skillful manufacturers and traders who earned their living without need to those outside their lands. After the callers to Allah and the family of Saud had completed their mission in Najd, they expanded their mission to Makkah, Madīnah, and the southern region of Arabia. They communicated with the contemporary and former scholars of Makkah and Madīnah. But, seeing that the people there were persisting in their attitude of glorifying the domes and building them over the graves, along with practicing polytheistic rites there and calling upon the dead for relief, Imam

Saud ibn ‘Abdul-‘Azīz ibn Muhammad set out towards Hijaz 11 years after the death of the Shaykh. He fought the people of Tā’if then marched to Makkah. Before this incident, Emir ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Abdur-Rahmān al-Madhāyifi had proceeded to the people of Tā’if and fought them with a huge military unit that included soldiers from Najd and elsewhere, sent to him by Imam Saud ibn ‘Abdul-‘Azīz ibn Muhammad the emir of Dir‘iyyah. They helped him until he seized Tā’if and expelled from it the emirs appointed by the Sharif. He proclaimed his call there and guided the people to Allah and forbade them from practicing Shirk and worshiping Ibn ‘Abbās and others who used to be worshiped by the ignorant and fools from among the people of Tā’if. Afterwards, Emir Saud headed to Hijaz in compliance with the orders of his father ‘Abdul-‘Azīz, and the troops gathered around Makkah.

When the Sharif of Makkah realized that he must either surrender or flee, he fled to Jeddah. Saud and the Muslims accompanying him entered Makkah without fight and seized it on Saturday morning, eighth of Muharram, 1218 AH. They proclaimed their call to the religion of Allah and demolished the domes that were built over the grave of Khadījah and others. They removed all the domes and proclaimed the call to the Oneness of Allah Almighty. They appointed therein scholars to teach people, guides, and judges to judge according to the Shariah. Shortly after that, Madīnah was conquered as well. The Saud family seized Madīnah in 1220 AH, two years after seizing Makkah, and both cities remained under the authority of the House of Saud. They appointed guides and instructors, established justice and ruled according to the Shariah. They treated the people with kindness, particularly the poor and needy among them. They aided them financially and morally, taught them the

Book of Allah, and directed them to what is good. They also held the scholars in high esteem and encouraged them to teach and guide people. Makkah and Madīnah continued to be under the rule of the Saud family till 1226 AH. After this, the Egyptian and Turkish armies started to move toward Hijaz in order to fight the Saud family and expel them from Makkah and Madīnah. There were many reasons for this step, some of which we have already mentioned earlier. Out of these reasons is that the enemies of the Saud family, accompanied by those who envied them and those superstitious men who lacked insight, and some politicians who wished to put off this call out of fear that it would remove them from their posts and destroy their ambitions, lied about the Shaykh and his followers and supporters and claimed that they hated the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and the Awliyā' and denied their Karāmāt. They also accused them of making some statements that denoted their disrespect for the messengers of Allah (peace be upon them). Some ignorant and prejudiced people believed such claims and took it as a pretext to attack them and be at war with them. They encouraged the Turks and Egyptians in their fight against them, which led to so much sedition and struggle. The fight between the Egyptian and Turkish troops on the one hand and the family of Saud in Najd and Hijaz on the other hand lasted for quite a long time that lasted from 1226 AH to 1233 AH. Throughout those seven years, there was a fierce struggle and strife between the power of the truth and the power of falsehood.

This, in conclusion, is the truth about Shaykh Muhammad ibn ‘Abdul-Wahhāb (may Allah have mercy upon him) who rose with the sole purpose of prevailing the religion of Allah, guiding people to the Oneness of Allah, and disapproving of the Bid‘ah and superstition that the people had introduced into it. He also rose to obligate the people to adhere to the truth and deter them from following falsehood, as well as enjoin them to do good and forbid them from doing evil.

Such is the summary of the call of the Shaykh (may Allah have mercy upon him). As for his approach in creedal matters, he followed the way of the righteous predecessors who believed in Allah, His names and attributes, His angels, His messengers, His books, the Last Day, and the divine decree with its good and bad aspects according to the methodology of the leading Muslim Imams regarding the Oneness of Allah and singling Him alone with worship, and the belief in the names and attributes of Allah in a way that is appropriate to Him. He did not deny Allah’s attributes, nor did he liken Allah to His creation. He believed in the resurrection, recompense and reckoning, and believed in Paradise and Hell. In the matters of Iman, he adopted the way of the righteous predecessors; namely, that Iman consists of words and actions and that it increases by doing good and decreases by committing sins. The Shaykh (may Allah have mercy upon him) followed the same creedal principles as the righteous predecessors in word and deed and never deviated from their path. He did not adopt an individual approach nor a private way, rather he adhered to the methodology of the righteous predecessors from the Companions and those who followed them rightly. May Allah be pleased with them all.

He proclaimed his call in Najd and its surrounding areas and fought those who rejected it until the religion of Allah prevailed and the truth emerged triumphant. He, like other Muslims, was keen on calling people to Allah, disapproving of what is wrong, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. He further obligated the people to adhere to the truth and persistently deterred them from doing what is wrong until they gave it up. He took it upon himself to express his disapproval of Bid‘ah and superstition until Allah Almighty eliminated them by means of his call. So, the three aforementioned reasons were behind the enmity and conflict that broke out between him and the people. They can be summed up as follows:

First: Disapproving Shirk and calling people to adhere to the pure monotheistic belief. Second: Disapproving Bid‘ah and superstition like building over the graves and taking them as mosques as well as other similar practices like holding Mawlid (Prophet’s birthday) celebrations and traditions that the Sufi sects had introduced. Third: He commanded people to do good that Allah ordained and imposed it upon them by force. Those who refused had to accept it by force or else they would be subject to punishment. He forbade them to do evil and deterred them from committing evil by establishing the relevant corporal punishments. In this way, the truth prevailed and falsehood regressed. People acted in a good and upright manner in their markets, mosques and all their affairs.

There were no Bid‘ah nor Shirk in their lands, and evil ceased to be done openly. Instead, the one who saw their land and conditions would remember the righteous predecessors and how their manners were during the time of the Prophet (may Allah’s peace and

blessings be upon him), his Companions and those who followed in their footsteps in the privileged earlier centuries, may Allah have mercy upon them. They followed their ways, copied their methodology patiently and diligently and strove for that cause. However, some change occurred a long time after the Shaykh and many of his sons and supporters had died, resulting in the affliction caused by the Turkish and Egyptian states, in confirmation of the statement of Allah Almighty: {Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own attitude and conduct.} [Surat ar-Ra'd: 11] We ask Allah Almighty to make their suffering an expiation and purification from sins and a reason for elevating their ranks and granting martyrdom for those who were killed among them, may Allah be pleased with them and have mercy upon them. Their call is still established and dominant until this day by the grace of Allah. Despite the fact that the Egyptian troops had committed mischief in Najd, no sooner had a few years passed than the call was revived and spread anew thanks to the efforts of Imam Turki ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Saud (may Allah have mercy upon him) who undertook to revive the call five years later. He spread it in Najd and its surrounding areas and the scholars were present everywhere. He also expelled all the Turkish and Egyptian troops that were in Najd and its villages and towns. In 1240 AH, the call had already spread all over Najd.

The destruction of Dir'iyyah and the bringing down of the state of the House of Saud had taken place in 1233 AH. During that time, the people in Najd remained in a state of chaos and fighting for about five years, from 1234 till 1239 AH. Then, in 1240, the Muslims gathered around Imam Turki ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Saud. The truth became manifest and

prevailed, and the scholars wrote messages to the villages and towns, encouraging people and calling them to the religion of Allah. The strife among them was extinguished after the extensive wars that were ignited by the Egyptians and their helpers. It was thus that the religion of Allah emerged victorious, and the people engaged in education and guidance until matters went back to normal and the people restored the same conditions they had during the time of the Shaykh and his students, sons, and supporters, may Allah be pleased with them and have mercy upon them. The call has lasted since 1240 AH up to our present time by the grace of Allah. The House of Saud continued to succeed one another in leadership, Da‘wah and Jihad, and so did the descendants of the Shaykh and the scholars of Najd;

they succeeded one another in calling to Allah and guiding people to His way and to the truth. The two sacred cities, Makkah and Madīnah, remained separated from the Saudi state for a long period of time. Then, they returned under its authority when Imam ʻAbdul-ʻAzīz ibn Abdur-Rahmān ibn Faysal ibn Turki ibn ʻAbdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Saud (may Allah have mercy upon him) seized them. They are still under the authority of the Saudi dynasty up to the present time.

All praise be to Allah for that. We ask Allah Almighty to give righteousness to the remaining members of the family of Saud and the family of the Shaykh and all the Muslim scholars in this country and elsewhere. We ask Him to guide them to what pleases Him and to give righteousness to the Muslim scholars wherever they are. We ask Him to use them all in supporting the truth and destroying falsehood, and to grant success to those who call to guidance to accomplish their duties enjoined upon them by Allah. We ask Him to guide us and them to His straight path, and to maintain the Two Sacred Cities, their annexes as well as all the Muslim countries with guidance, following the right religion and glorifying the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him), and to bless us all by having good understanding of them, holding fast to them patiently, and referring judgment to them until we meet Allah Almighty. He is Capable to do everything and to respond to the supplications. This is the utmost that I could do in introducing the Shaykh and his life, his call, his helpers, and his foes. All help is sought from Allah alone and we rely upon Him alone. There is neither might nor strength save with Allah, the Most High, the Great. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon His slave and Messenger, our

Prophet and leader, Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah, and upon his family, Companions and those who followed his way and adhered to his guidance. All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.